

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-10

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TO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN NIACT IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY SANA

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, MASS, IR, SO

SUBJECT: IRANIAN MILITARY MISSION TO SOMALIA

REF: A) TEHRAN 6019; B) TEHRAN 5960

1. PLEASE CONVEY TO SHAH OUR APPRECIATION FOR INFORMATION
CONTAINED REF A, PARTICULARLY HIS SOLICITATION OF US QUES-
TIONS FOR SOMALIS AND WILLINGNESS TO SHARE WITH USG RE-
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SULTS OF FORTHCOMING VISIT TO SOMALIA BY IRANIAN MILITARY
ASSISTANCE TEAM. DEPT WISHES TAKE OPPORTUNITY TO OFFER
SUGGESTIONS FOR IRANIAN MILITARY MISSION AND ALSO TO INFORM
IRANIANS OF OUR THINKING WITH REGARD POSSIBLE SALE OF ARMS
TO SOMALIA BY OUR FRIENDS AND ALLIES. DEPT WOULD PREFER
THAT SOMALIS NOT RPT NOT BE TOLD THAT INFORMATION TO BE
OBTAINED BY IRANIAN TEAM WOULD BE SHARED WITH US.

2. DEPT WOULD BE INTERESTED IN FOLLOWING:

A) SOMALI ASSESSMENT OF ACTUAL AND POTENTIAL MILITARY THREATS TO SOMALIA AS PRESENTLY CONSTITUTED (AS DISTINCT FROM "GREATER SOMALIA") AND IRANIAN OBJECTIVE ANALYSIS OF VALIDITY THIS ASSESSMENT.

B) WHAT ARE THE CURRENT STATUS AND NUMBERS OF SOVIET MILITARY ADVISORS IN THE SOMALI ARMED FORCES? ARE THEY IN A POSITION TO FRUSTRATE SOMALI MILITARY OPERATIONS? CAN THE SOMALI FORCES OPERATE EFFECTIVELY WITHOUT THE ADVISORS?

C) WHAT IS THE CURRENT LEVEL OF SOMALI COMBAT READINESS? IS THERE A PRESENT OR PROJECTED SHORTAGE OF SPARE PARTS, AMMO OR POL WHICH WOULD HAMPER SOMALI MILITARY ACTION?

D) WHAT IS THE EXTENT OF LOYALTY TO PRESIDENT SIAD WITHIN THE SOMALI MILITARY? HOW WOULD LOSS OF THE SOVIET MILITARY SUPPLY LINE OR OPENING OF SOURCES FOR WESTERN ARMS IMPACT ON LOYALTY TO SIAD?

E) WHERE, WHEN AND HOW (AND ALSO BY WHOM) DO SOMALIS SECRET

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PLAN TO USE ANY ARMS OBTAINED FROM IRAN?

F) WHAT ARMS OR MILITARY MATERIEL ARE SOMALIS GETTING FROM OTHER COUNTRIES, INCLUDING THE USSR?

3. IN CONVERSATION WITH IRANIAN OFFICIALS CONCERNING IRANIAN TEAM'S VISIT TO SOMALIA YOU SHOULD TAKE OPPORTUNITY TO POINT OUT:

A) US WISHES TO SEE SOMALIA CAPABLE OF DEFENDING EXISTING NATIONAL TERRITORY WITHOUT RELYING ON SOVIETS BUT ALSO WITHOUT BEING ENCOURAGED TO PURSUE SOMALI IRREDENTIST AMBITIONS IN PORTIONS OF ETHIOPIA, KENYA AND DJIBOUTI WHICH ARE PART OF "GREATER SOMALIA" IN EYES OF SOMALIS.

B) WE HAVE INDICATED TO THE SOMALI GOVERNMENT A SYMPATHETIC UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR NEED TO MAKE PROVISION FOR THEIR LEGITIMATE DEFENSIVE NEEDS, BUT WITHOUT MAKING A COMMITMENT TO SUPPLY US ARMS.

C) GIVEN THE INCREASING FORAYS OF SOMALI "IRREGULARS"

INTO THE OGADEN AND RECENT INCIDENTS IN THE KENYA-SO-MALIA-ETHIOPIA BORDER AREA, WE BELIEVE COUNTRIES SUPPLYING SOMALIA SHOULD BE ESPECIALLY CAUTIOUS ABOUT SUPPLYING ITEMS (E.G. SMALL ARMS AND OTHER LIGHT WEAPONRY) WHICH ARE READILY SUSCEPTIBLE TO DIVERSION TO "IRREGULAR" USE IN PURSUIT OF SOMALI IRREDENTISM.

D) WE BELIEVE THAT WHILE AVOIDING PRE-CONDITIONS FOR ANY ARMS SALES, THE SOMALIS SHOULD BE MADE AWARE THAT CONTINUED UNRESTRICTED SOVIET USE OF SOMALI MILITARY FACILITIES WOULD OVER THE LONGER TERM BE INCOMPATIBLE WITH A MILITARY SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP BASED ON ARMS

FROM NON-SOVIET SOURCES.

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4. RE IRANIAN ARMS TRANSFER TO SOMALIA, YOU SHOULD FRANKLY INFORM THE SHAH THAT THIS IS A SUBJECT WHICH WE STILL HAVE UNDER INTENSIVE STUDY. AS HE KNOWS, WE ARE BOUND BY LAW TO PERMIT THE TRANSFER OF U.S. ORIGIN ARMS ONLY TO A THIRD COUNTRY TO WHICH WE OURSELVES WOULD SELL OR TRANSFER SIMILAR EQUIPMENT AT THAT TIME. AT THE PRESENT TIME SOMALIA IS NOT ELIGIBLE TO PURCHASE US DEFENSE ARTICLES UNDER THE ARMS EXPORT CONTROL ACT OR TO RECEIVE MILITARY ASSISTANCE UNDER THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1961. IT HAS NOT YET BEEN DECIDED WHETHER A DETERMINATION BY THE SECRETARY TO PERMIT SUCH TRANSFERS WILL BE GIVEN. ALSO, WE WOULD HAVE TO RECEIVE FROM THE SOMALI GOVERNMENT THE STANDARD USE AND RE-TRANSFER ASSURANCES REGARDING THE ARTICLES CONCERNED. THIS SUBJECT HAS NOT YET BEEN DISCUSSED WITH THE SOMALI GOVERNMENT. THEREFORE, WHILE REAFFIRMING THAT WE WANT TO WORK CLOSELY WITH IRAN AND OTHER FRIENDLY COUNTRIES TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE CURRENT SITUATION IN SOMALIA, THE SHAH SHOULD BE CAUTIONED RE FOREGOING RESTRICTIONS ON ARMS TRANSFERS UNTIL WE HAVE HAD A FURTHER OPPORTUNITY TO ASSESS THE SITUATION. THE IRANIAN TEAM'S OBSERVATIONS COULD BE VERY HELPFUL IN THIS REGARD. VANCE

NOTE BY OC/T: MESSAGE DISSEMINATION PER MR. PERITO S/S-O.

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